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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/748,733	12/30/2003	Dwight P. Morejohn	GUID-036	7537
36154	7590	01/11/2006	EXAMINER	
LAW OFFICE OF ALAN W. CANNON 834 SOUTH WOLFE ROAD SUNNYVALE, CA 94086			KILKENNY, PATRICK L	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3732	

DATE MAILED: 01/11/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/748,733

Applicant(s)

MOREJOHN ET AL.

Examiner

Patrick J. Kilkenney

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-43 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2-10, 16-19, 21 and 23-43 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 11-15, 20 and 22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 4/08/2004 is noted. The submission is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

Election/Restrictions

Claims 2-10, 16-19, 21, and 23-43 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected group and species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on 11/07/2005.

Applicant's election with traverse of Group I, Species II, including claims 1, 11-15, 20, and 22, in the reply filed on 11/07/2005 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that it would not be an undue burden upon the Office to examine all the claims in the instant application together. This is not found persuasive because the process of providing transabdominal access can be practiced utilizing various retractors, and therefore examination of the process will not necessarily follow a search strategy for the examination of a transabdominal system with the same structural limitations. Furthermore, all eighteen patentably distinct species are of significant structural difference that multiple search strategies would be needed.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 11-15, 20 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nicholas et al. (5,967,974). Nicholas et al. discloses a transabdominal access system with upper and lower spreader portions(Fig. 3, #'s 114 and 126) configured to lift the rib cage while depressing the abdomen to produce a substernal space. The lower spreader portion comprises a depressor portion (Fig. 3, # 112) and the upper portion has a hook for contacting the sternal area (Fig. 3, #132). There are also first and second side portions (Fig. 3, # 113 and opposite side) positioned between the upper and lower spreader portions and are integrally connected to the upper and lower spreader portions. The upper spreader portion also has a screw-type retraction mechanism for lifting and retracting the sternum (Fig. 3, #128).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See attached PTO-892 for prior art of reference. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be

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directed to Patrick J. Kilkenny whose telephone number is (571) 272-8684. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri, 8-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kevin P. Shaver can be reached on (571) 272-4720. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


PJK



Patrick J. Kilkenny
January 6, 2006
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1/6/06


Cary E. O'Connor
Primary Examiner